THE NEWS

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PARIS. : : : KENTUCKY

MY SUNBEAM.

There are two sunbeams on the floor;
Two sunbeams fair to see;
And one belongs to skies above,
And one belongs to me.
My sunbeam lifts her tiny hands,
Her playfellow to grasp,
When lo, a shadow! and the beam
Eludes my darling's clasp.

Yet once again it comes; and see,
It lies now here, now there;
It kisses baby's dimpled cheek,
And nestles in her hair;
Makes golden every little curl
Upon the precious head,
'Till, like a dream, again its light
From baby's side has fled.

Oh! wondering baby eyes, which weep
At shadows left behind,
Fear not, the cloud will lift, and you
The vanished beam shall find.
Look! even now upon the wall
It climbs, then tumbles down
To shine at baby's feet ere it
Once more her head shall crown.

God grant, dear little one, that Heaven
Its brightest beams may lay
Upon the paths your feet must tread
Throughout life's little day.
Full many a beam of purest gold
Your hands will strive to clasp;
Full many a shadow stern will snatch
The sunbeam from your grasp.

But even ere you cease to grieve,
Behold, the clouds roll by,
And where the shadow dwelt before
A hundred sunbeams lie.
Look always for the brightest spot,
As you through life shall go,
And Hope and Faith shall fill your heart
With Heaven's purest glow.
—*Mary D. Brine, in N. Y. Independent.*

A "CUR'US" WILL.

"Yes'm, tell you what, the world does move." The speaker was "Uncle" Ben, a man without kindred, yet uncle to everybody. "Time was when a woman would no more think of handlin' money than of flyin'. Why, as good a man as old Deacon White would take the cloth his wife had been a-weavin', down to the store, git the pay for it, and bring it home, and if she put as much as her finger onto a silver quarter, or a bill, he'd snap out: 'Let that alone, won't you? That 'ere's money.'

"The cur'us thing about it was she never thought of answering him back, and standin' up for her rights. 'Twan't heard on in them days.

"Once in a while, when Mis' White wanted a new ribbon or somethin' uncommon, I've seen that woman stan' and tease for fifty cents, and he'd pretend he didn't hear her, and finally he'd hand it over to her with a dreadful scowl onto his face, and say: 'Here 'tis, Melissy, and don't you luse it. Where's your handkercher to tie it up in?" And Melissy would look as plesed as could be, when perhaps she'd done seventy-five or a hundred dollars' wuth of weavin' besides all her housework.

"But the meanest thing I ever heerd on was the way Joshua Tubbs portioned off his darter Betsey. You see she'd spun and wove, and wove and spun, and never'd had nothin' of her own. She'd got along in years, and was bent just nigh about double. Poor woman, she was as crooked as a rainbow. She'd got so that she was just a machine for work. She never smiled nor nothin'. Her father'd took all her airnin's and had added farm to farm—stunny kind of land it was that wouldn't raise nothin' but mulleins and huckleberries; he'd been salting down money, too, in the bank—he was allers puttin' in an' never takin' out. Neighbors used to say that his hens had a mournful way of cacklin', as if they knowed their eggs would be grabbed afore they was cold, and sold. There wan't no day so stormy but what you'd see Joshua Tubbs goin' by with a load o' shiptimber or bark, and on top o' that would be one o' Betsey's pieces o' factory, or a dozen hen's eggs, or a peck o' apples.

"Wall, he'd laid up money amazin' fast. When he came to die he was wuth fifteen thousand dollars or more, and how dew you s'pose he pervided for Betsey? Why, in his will he just give her a hum with her brother, Artemus, on the old place, but not a cent she could call her own. She couldn't work no more, she was so wore out, she could not straighten herself up, and was old and humly, and Artemus and his wife, when they found out she couldn't do nothin', they didn't want her; so they was kinder hard on her, and turned her off, and she got low-spirited and deranged-like, and went over to Job Watson's mill-pond and drowned herself, and that was the last o' her.

"But the most cur'us will that I ever heerd on was Deacon 'Bijah Clark's. Remember it, don't you? You don't? I declare if I'd ever heerd it onct, I couldn't have forgot it. The Deacon railly did think a heap o' his wife, and Esther Clark was a good woman if ever there was one. He was one o' them men as thought a woman never ought to touch money, and he'd pervided so she wouldn't have no trouble o' that kind.

"His will began like this: 'I, Bijah Clark, of the town of Salem, considerin' the onsartainty of this mortal life, and bein' of sound memory, blessed be Almighty God for the same, dew give and bequeath unto my beloved wife, Esther Clark, all and singular, the personal property which she owned at the time of her intermarriage with me.' You see in them days wimmen couldn't even hold what was their own, and for that matter, Esther hadn't nothin' but a chist of drawers and a feather bed. 'Also one-third part of the farm in Salem where I now reside, the same to be taken from that portion not includin' the buildin's; also, the use and occupancy of the south-east closet of the house where I now reside; also the privilege of cookin' at the fire-place, and the use of the tin baker in the kitchen of said house during the term of one year and six months after my decease; the same to be in full recompense of, and for any dower and thirds which she may or can in anywise claim and demand out of my estate.'

"Now, wan't that ere cur'us? And not exactly easy for the old woman, was it? Don't know what 'Bijah thought she was goin' to dew when the eighteen months was up; couldn't cook by the fire-place no more, couldn't sleep in the bed-room, no money, nothin' to to do but go and reside, as the lawyers say, on the one-third of the farm not includin' the buildin's.

"The will went on: 'I give to my niece, Liddy Clark, one wooden clock, two brass kettles, all my iron and hollow ware, one fireshovel, two heifers, six yallow chairs, one Bible, one bed with bedding and bedstead, Doddridge's "Rise and Progress in Religion," one new chist, Doddridge's Regeneration," one table, one stand with oil-cloth cover for the same.

"'To my nephew, 'Lijah Clark, I unreservedly give and bequeath all the rest, residue and remainder of my personal estate and effects not herein-before disposed of, includin' that one-third portion of my farm upon which are situated my houses and tenementals.'

"Tacked onto the last eend o' the will, was a codercil in which 'Bijah Clark give the children of his former pastor, Elder Eleazer Smith, 'A set o' blue-edged crockery—what there was left on't—"Fox's Book of Martyrs"—cheerful kind o' readin' for the young folks—and a brass warming-pan.'

"You see he got things dreadfully mixed up, brass kettles and Bibles, but the will was drawn only a day before his death, when things was gettin' kind o' misty in his own mind. He meant that his wife shouldn't have no trouble handlin' money. The deacon hadn't been dead a month, afore his niece Liddy, dropped off, too, and that left all her property to her brother 'Lijah; so Doddrige's 'Rise' and 'Regeneration,' went right back again to the old shelf.

"'Twan't long afore 'Lijah and his wife let their Aunt Esther know who was the marsters in that house. I s'pose it was natur' to do jist so, and human natur' is poor stuff anyway, and it warn't long afore she was driv into that ere southeast bed-room and closet, and told that she must remain there.

"'Lijah's wife, right contrary to the will, forbid her cooking by the fire-place but sent her a leetle dish o' puddin' and merlasses three times a day, saying that it was good enough for anybody and dreadful fillin'.

"It was no matter whether Mis' Clark liked it or not; it sartainly wan't very fillin' to her, for she growed poor on it, and looked ten years older than she did on the day the deacon died.

"Now, Mis' Clark was a nat'ral cook, and ye know what that means. If she set out to fry a piece o' pork, why, it was browned to jest the right brown; even in bilin' pertaters she knew jest how to dew it. They warn't never soggy, but allers come out mealy and whole. When she fairly laid herself out, bless me! You should have eat her doughnuts and gingerbread and pumpkin pies. It was cookin' as was cookin'. She'd beat the hull neighborhood.

"Now the deacon set a good deal by Esther, and especialty by her victuals; and, arter all, a few ribbons and curls may catch a husband, but there's nothin' like good, hullsome cookin' to keep him in traces. The way to a man's affections lies right through the stomach, and it stan's to reason it should be so, for yaller biscuits and sour bread naterally brings on dyspepsy, and that makes everybody cross and snarlin'.

"But I was tellin' how that will worked. 'Lijah and his wife put the screws onto Esther, and the property was given in such cur'us way that she couldn't do nothin' with it. True, she had the use of one-third o' the farm, but there wern't no buildings onto it, and I reckon that land is wus than money for a woman to handle; so there she was right under their thumb, and they knowed it. Folks kinder thought she was losing her mind; anyhow she got drefful low-spirited.

"It happened about this time that Squire Peters lost his wife—Deacon Clark's folks and the Peterses had allers been drefful intimate. Now a very cur'us circumstance occurred, or, rather, it came to light. It seems that some thirty years before, when Esther was a rosy-cheeked girl—even old folks is young some time in their lives—Squire Peters writ her a letter, askin' her to marry him.

"In them days postage was high, and he hadn't no two shillin's to fool away, so he put it into the hands of his Uncle Zebedee, who was goin' right to Salem, and asked him to carry it to Esther. This was in the month o' March.

"Zebedee Peters was one o' them awful forgitful men; he slipped that letter into his overcoat pocket, and then it slipped out o' his mind entirely. When he got home from his journey it had growed warm, and the overcoat was hung up in the closet, and nobody looked into the pockets till the next fall. Then what should Zebedee, in fumbling around, draw out, but that ere love letter. 'Twas a cur'us circumstance.

"In the meantime, during this ere summer, Squire Peters, feelin' a good deal slighted in not hearing from Esther, had done just what many another disappointed man does, engaged himself right away to a girl he didn't care any great for, and Esther had been married to Deacon Clark.

"In course o' time Squire Peters' folks bought a farm up to Salem, came up there to live, and things moved on as if nothing had happened, and nothin' railly had happened, for the Squire kept his own secret, and that was the end on't. All parties lived happily enough.

"In them days divorces warn't talked about, nor incompatibilities. When men and women got married they knowed it was for life, and they'd got to stand it for better or for wus. Besides, it was such hard work to get a livin,' they didn't get no time to sigh over what might have been. A man and his wife was like a pair o' oxen—they was yoked together—and it was handier, drawing a load, not to pull apart.

"Just at the right time Mis' Peters died, and the Squire railly mourned for her. She was a mighty good woman, though she could'nt cook like Esther Clark, and when she'd been buried nigh onto four weeks, Squire Peters happened to meet Esther, if you can call that happenin' for which a man has been contrivin' and watchin' for five days.

"Wall, he just slid that old love letter, yaller with age, into her hand, and explained the circumstance a little, and that's all he said and done then. You see he wanted to wait till a proper time. Then he contrived that she should get an invite to spend the winter with a fourth couisin o' hern—she was awful scant on for relations—and then she got fatted up with somethin' more fillin' than puddin' and merlasses.

"At the end o' the year, he went on and married Mis' Clark, and brought her home. The first thing Squire Peters did was to turn over a new leaf with his wife.

"One day he'd sold some heifers, and he tossed the money over to her in a careless way, and said: 'Now Esther, count that ere over and see if it's all straight.'

"If he had thrown some black spiders at her, she wouldn't have been more skeered.

"'I don't know nothin' about money,' she said, and she remembered how Deacon Clark used to snap her up when she only jest teched it.

"'Wall, it's time you did. Now you've got to begin. There's no use in wimmen folks being so ignorant about business matters.'

"'Why, I never studied 'rithmetic but four weeks, and then I never went no further than substraction.'

"'Never mind that, Esther,' said the Squire, laughin'; 'I heered you countin' up six dozen eggs t'other day, and money hain't no different from them, as I knows on.'

"You ought to have seen the look on that woman's face as she turned over the bills. There was seventy dollars of 'em, and she done pretty well at countin 'em. The fust time she made ninety dollars of 'em, and the last time, forty. 'Twern't so bad as it might have been, and on the other hand 'twan't what you'd call accurat'; but her husband kept her at it, encouragin' her along, an' helpin' her on, for, as he said, when she got to be Mis' Widow Peters, he wanted her to know enough 'bout dollars and cents not to be imposed upon: at which the tears would come into Esther's eyes, and she'd say she hoped she shouldn't outlive him.

"'Nobody knows nothin' about that, but one or t'other has got to go fust, and ye may as well l'arn all ye can 'bout takin' keer of yourself.'

"They was an awful happy couple. Say what you're a mind to, married folks gits along better when there's plenty of love between them, than when they're drawin' together just from a sense of dooty. I've allers said I should enjoy my second marriage better'n my fust, I was sure, though I've never found one, as yet. It's and awful responsiblity to go into the meetin'-house and say: 'With my worldly goods I thee endow,' especially when you ain't got no worldly goods to speak of.

"But I was tellin' 'bout Squire Peters. He got his wife pretty well broke in, so there couldn't nobody cheat her. One day he was going off to the city—for that was what Salem had growed to be—and says he: "Esther, you may sell them steers, if the man should come along.'

"'I think I will,' said she, laughing; 'how much do you ask for 'em?'

"Oh, seventy dollars,' he said, and off he went.

"I happened to be in there when the drover came. She talked around a leetle about the price, and actually sold them steers for eighty-five dollars, and then she took the money, not a bit scared; she rung the silver and squinted at the bills to see if they was giniwin', as handy as them cashiers in a city bank; and she was about the pleasedest woman you ever see, when the Squire came hum, and she told him what she'd been up to. You see women don't enjoy being so helpless, and havin' overseers put over 'em, countin' every cent for 'em as if they was ijiots.

"There wan't much Squire Peters could do with that 'ere one-third of his wife's property—the will was such a drefful cur'us one—until he found a German who wanted to hire it. He leased it for some years, and what did he put onto it but a slaughter-house. You see Salem was growin' proper fast, and they wouldn't allow no killin' done in the city. Now that jest spi'lt Lijah's hull farm to him and to his wife. Not that it hurt their feelin's so much to see the poor bleatin' lambs driv' by, and the cows with their calves a followin' 'em—I'm not sayin' but beef-steak and mutton chops ain't good and toothsome in their way, but it takes the relish out o' them to see the dumb critters going to the slaughter, lookin' up at you with their great lonesome eyes—but Lijah and his wife weren't no way tender, and what fretted them was that there got to be such a drefful stench from the slaughter-house there weren't no livin' near it. Mis' Peters' lot was to the south of 'em, and the wind was mostly blowin' from that 'ere quarter; and Lijah was took sick and had a heavy doctor's bill to pay—they all got ailin'—the cows wouldn't drink out o' the crick, the water was so pisened, and folks went along the road a-holdin' their noses, till finally Lijah couldn't stan' it no longer; so he just buys out the widow's hull right in the place—pays a harnsom' price for it, too—and then he buys out the German's lease; altogether it cost him one good sum.

"'Now,' said Squire Peters to Lijah, 'hope you'll larn somethin'. Never saw the time yet when the biter didn't get bit; and, furthermore'—you see the Squire'd been a Justice of the Peace, and had got into the habit o' usin' that ere word—'I'll leave it to you if you hadn't ought to have used your aunt a leetle better, seein' you started poor as poverty, and all you're wuth has come from that ere poverty.'

"You see he give him an awful talkin' to, and it done some good, for the Squire said that Lijah was the shamedest-lookin' man that ever he see.

"Heerd how the Squire and his wife died, hain't you? Well, 'twas a dreffu cur'us circumstance. They was both took the same day with a fever—ketched it from one another, I 'spect. Years gone by, when folks was took sick, it was called a 'Dispensation o' Providence,' but now nobody can't have no fever, nor dipthery, nor nothin', without somebody's a-talkin' about sanertary conditions, a-peeking into the drean, or sarchin' the well to see if some live critter hasn't got drownded in it.

"The Squire and his wife never knowed nothin' from the first minit they was took. One died one day, and t'other the next, and for all the Squire's trainin', and Esther being so capable, she never lived to be Mis' Widow Peters. They was buried in the same grave, and the minister preached a most feelin' sermon from this ere text: 'They was lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they was not divided.'

"Since that ere time wimmen folks has made a dredful advance, but whether it's back'ards or for'ards I can't tell. Now when a man dies he gives his girl jest as much as he does his boy, and she keeps it, too. She don't go to no man to count it for her. You'll see her a-lookin' over the papers, a-sarchin' how's money's quoted, and she goes to the bank all by herself, and she has a great roll of bills when she's out a-tradin'; but whether or no wimmen folks as a hull is any better off than they used to be is more'n I can tell; still I can't see as knowin' somethin' has sp'iled 'em."—*Anna Linwood, in N. E. Farmer.*

Mountains.

It is everywhere the mountains which control the features of the landscape. Wherever a wave in the earth's crust has been arrested after its upheaval, it is the height and structure of the mountain range thus established which determine the lines where running water shall channel its way to the sea, hollowing out valley systems, wearing away, building up and moulding the surface of the land into all its variety and complexity of contour. The same mountain barrier directs the air currents, orders the rainfall and brings back the clouds from the sea to replenish the fountains of the streams which flow forever from its flanks. It is the degraded rock of the highlands, too, which furnishes soil to cover the earth's nakedness and clothe it with verdure. In a true sense, therefore, all natural scenery, even to its minor details, displays the dominating force of mountain masses, although they may be a thousand miles away. But it is in the mountains themselves where the handiwork of Nature's elemental forces is visibly and comprehensively manifested. Here where flood and fire and frost have been working their will throughout all geologic time to rear and ruin is found the most complete embodiment at once of infinite might and absolute repose. Vast and silent and strong, the great mountains are the chosen home of the Sublime in Nature. Along the axial ridges of the continents the great rock masses which furnish the grandest and most impressive scenery are naturally looked for. Our own Rocky Mountain region, with its domes and pinnacles and buttressed walls, its gorges and chasms and cascades, furnishes stupendous examples of the awful and majestic. All that is wild and extravagant can be seen in the wonderlands of Monument and Yellowstone Parks. Every aspect of nature, from the savage and appalling to the green pastures and still waters which soothe and "restore the soul," can be found somewhere among the heights and dephts of the Great Divide. The entire region is full of interest, and yet the world knows comparatively little of it. There are whole mountain systems of which no adequate geological or geographical survey has yet been made, and important ranges which are yet practically unknown. Near the northern boundary of the United States is the true apex of the Continent, where the water from melting snows flows to Hudson's Bay through the Saskatchewan, and to the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific by way of the Missouri and the Columbia. From this interesting point a score of glittering peaks can be seen which are all 10,000 feet in height, and yet this region and the parallel ranges southward for a hundred miles seem to have been avoided almost entirely by tourist and student. There has been no twisting or crumpling of the sheets of rock north of the Dearborn River, at which point the folded strata indicate volcanic disturbance just where the Belt Range begins. But the level or regularly inclined rock layers of different degrees of hardness have weathered away, leaving sharp edges, while glaciers and torrents have excavated vast amphitheatres, giving to the whole mass a startling resemblance to architectural ruins. Genuine glaciers were recently discovered here by an exploring party of the Northern Transcontinental Survey, which are the only known examples of this kind in the Continental Divide, with the exception of those reported in the Wind River Mountains some years ago by Dr. D. Hayden.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

How a Freeze-Out Game Worked.

"As I understand it," said the Chicago lawyer, as he leaned back, "you run a grist mill?"

"Yes, sir."

"It is owned by a stock company, and you have ten shares?"

"The stock now sells at 95. You want to bear it down to about 30, and buy in a controlling interest?"

"Exactly."

"Very well. Your game is to report that the mill is unsafe, machinery out of order, the wheat crop poor, the stockholders discouraged, and your belief that the concern will lose $10,000 during the next year. Then offer your own stock at 45."

In about a week the man returned, and when the lawyer asked him how it worked, he replied:

"I followed your advice. After doing some tall talking I offered my stock at 45."

"Of course."

"And you have cleaned 'em out?"

"No, sir! They bought my stock in before I could turn round twice, and I am $5,000 out of pocket!"

"Yes, I see—I see—I see. Humph! Of course I see! Your game now is to feign insanity; go to the asylum for a few weeks, and have me appointed your guardian!"—*Wall Street News.*

—William Faulkner, of Burlington, Vt., is a striking instance of a man whose conscience troubles him for a deed which was decided by the courts to be meritorious. Twenty years ago, under great provocation, he shot and killed a ruffian, for which he was promptly acquitted on the plea of justifiable homicide. Nevertheless, for the past twenty years he has found it impossible to sleep after three o'clock in the morning. Remorse seizes him at that hour, and for several hours after he is driven out of his house. As there is no other place open at this time, he has made it a practice for twenty years past to go to the press-room of a daily paper, where he is always looked for exactly at 3:15 a. m.—*Rutland Herald.*

—A Mormon missionary in Georgia was pelted with eggs, and driven out of town by blood-hounds.—*Chicago Times.*

Humming-Birds.

Mrs. C. M. Russell, of the Huntington Memorial Home for Old Ladies, on Washington street, has two pairs of young hummming-birds in captivity, so tame that a stranger can handle their cages without disturbing them in the least. While the cage is being handled they fly about with a buzzing noise, alternately alighting in the ring of the cage or upon the roost, uttering a faint "tweet" while on the wing. Although never seen to alight and feed in freedom, they often perch upon the edge of a small cup in the cage and sip a sirup of sugar and water prepared by Mrs. Russell, who also keeps a bouquet of bright flowers in the cage.

These tiny, gorgeously plumaged birds, not much larger than grasshoppers, make no attempt now to escape, but will perch upon the head of Mrs. Russell and take sirup from the cup while she holds it. The bill, wings and tail are black, the back from the neck to the tail a rich metallic green, and the throat white with reddish spots just beneath the bill. Beneath, the birds are white, the color deepening to a reddish tint toward the wings. There is a white spot back of each eye, and the tail is banded with white at the tip. They enjoy bright sunshine, and show every sign of contentment as they sit upon the perch pluming their wing-feathers, cresting the feathers on their heads and spreading their tails.

The first bird flew into Mrs. Russell's room some two weeks ago. She caught it and kept it for several hours. It flew about the room, and allowed itself to be handled when tired. In brushing along the ceiling it whitened the feathers upon its head. She let it go toward evening, and two days afterward it returned again, and was identified by the mark upon its head. She put it in a cage, and by it captured four others, among them a ruby-throated humming-bird, which afterward escaped. A leading ornithologist believes the birds in captivity to be the young of the ruby-throated humming-bird.

Mrs. Russell has a taste for natural history studies, and is an enthuiastic admirer of handsomely plumaged butterflies and birds. In the cases we noticed little nets skillfully made of cotton and covered with lichens, which were such good imitations of bird work that they might deceive the birds themselves, and we were surprised to learn that the lady made them herself. These birds make seventeen of the humming-bird family Mrs. Russell has had in captivity. She succeeded in appalling one for three months, and then fearing lest the bird might suffer for want of proper food she chloroformed it and sent it to the taxidermist, who pronounced it the fattest hummingbird he ever saw! Being unable to supply the birds with insects she makes beef tea by soaking raw meat in water, and feeds it to them sparingly. The birds seem to relish the liquor. Mrs. Russel intends to winter a pair of these birds, if possible. It is a rare sight to see these little beauties living contentedly in cages.—*Norwich (Conn.) Bulletin.*

Petroleum—the Old in the New.

Perhaps never in the world's history has there occurred a case in which an article known from time immemorial, and counted as being of too small value to have any influence whatever, has all at once become one of the forces which sway the commerce, and almost the destinies of nations, to an extent so wonderful as is actually true in regard to petroleum. Its progress, its development, the grasp which it has on the welfare, the politics and the destiny of various countries, above all others, of our own, deserve a careful study. A few words in relation to one feature of its history are all that our present space will allow; we may recur to it at another time.

When we look into the columns of the various daily papers, and see with how much care the petroleum column is worked up, how its daily, and sometimes hourly, fluctuations are studied and quoted, and when we read a little further and see what enormous amounts of the crude article are brought to the sea-ports—New York, of course, chiefly—and what immense shipments are made to the very ends of the earth (for China, on the opposite side of the globe, is becoming now one of our very thirsty absorbents), we find it difficult to realize that all this is only a thing of yesterday, as it were. And yet that is strictly true. Forty years ago the word *petroleum* had no existence in currnet language. It is a compound term meaning simply rock oil; it was in the dictionaries, but it was not known to people in general. And yet the article at that time was on sale, in the large cities, and occasionally in smaller places. But it was in very small quantities, and was disposed of by the ounce. Very probably the entire stock on hand in the city of New York could have been held in a few five gallon cans. Those who are old enough to remember as far back as 1840 can possibly recall a very bad-smelling medicine to which perhaps they were subjected. It was called Seneca Oil, and was "dreadful good for the rheumatiz," being fortunately, in most instances, used externally, though not always. It was understood to be brought from the "Seneca Nation," in the Southwestern part of the State of New York; hence its name. Seneca oil was simply crude petroleum, and it is on the instant recognized that it came from the immediate vicinity, the very border of the region which has within these later years revolutionized the world with its oil wells.

But in going back to Seneca oil do we touch the early days of petroleum? Not at all; and we shall never touch them. No glimmering light shines back so far. When the fires fell on the Cities of the Plain, in the circuit of Jordan, at the northern end of the Dead Sea, the combustible material which insured the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was crued petroleum, the "slime pits" of the Vale of Siddim. Later still, petroleum, in its viscid form, served to make watertight the cradle of the baby Moses. But both these instances are relatively of modern date; for perfectly untold ages before that time petroleum had served to aid in preserving the Egyptian dead from decomposition, for the very oldest of all the mummies yet brought to light reveal its presence. And how early, in the experience of the human race its remarkable proprieties were brought into play we can only conjecture, for nothing remains to tell us.

Petroleum, therefore, has two histories, and they may be said to be as distinct from each other as though they were of two separate articles. The old reaches back, so we have seen, to the days of shadow and fable; the new begins August 6, 1859, only twenty-four years ago! And it begins at Titusville, on Oil Creek, a branch of the Alleghany River, in Crawford County, Pennsylvania. To such narrow limits in both time and space are we able to concentrate our attention, and yet we are looking at that which has become one of the mighty factors in modern civilization.

Now once more we will see what we can do in the work of bringing our ideas to a focus, and this time we will look at the subject geographically. Petroleum is found in very various parts of the world, in fact, almost in every country, to some extent. There are, however, certain points of concentration, and they are not many. The island of Zante, the mainland opposite in Hungary, Gallicia, and Moldavia; then again, away off on the Irawaddy, but most of all—on the Eastern Continent—the shores of the Caspian, especially near Baku; all of these produce petroleum, and the springs of Baku yield more than all the others combined. But we may fairly set all of them—the entire Eastern Continent—aside as being of no great moment. It is no mere figure of speech, it is not rank boasting, to say that petroleum, so far as the markets of the world are concerned, is an American product. Our regular daily and monthly yield so far surpasses all others that they cannot be counted as rivals in the trade and its results.

The springs of Baku yield about 500,000 barrels annually; we turn out that amount in the space of a very few weeks at any time. The records of 1879, not to speak of anything later, give the exports only from the three ports of Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York at 8,500,000 barrels. Surely we may call petroleum, in all its bearings, an American product.

And does it come from all parts of America? Perhaps few persons are aware how very much restricted really is the region which yields such incredible results. The fact is that the "oil center," that from which petroleum has been produced in paying quantities, can all be comprised within a space of 39½ *square miles.* It is wonderful.—*Scientific American.*

John Splan Tells What is a First-Class Driver.

John Splan, who began his career on the turf seventeen years ago, when he was seventeen years old, and has handled many of the best horses in the country, including the famous Rarus, is as ready and slick a talker as he is driver. "Yes, sir, a good driver is as essential as a good horse. I don't know as a good man could do much with a stick of a horse, but I've seen many a horse defeated that would have won if its driver had known his business. Just what makes a good driver you can't tell.

"You see, a driver has got to do more than sit behind a horse. He must look out for the shoeing, must get the horse's head just right, must study his horse, know how he ought to be fed, harnessed and all that. There are a hundred things besides the mere driving that he must have his eye on and be studying. Horses are just as different as people. Some are nervous, fretting and stewing all the time, and others are so cool that a cyclone wouldn't make them jump. Now, you see if a man that was used to driving one of the nervous kind took hold of a lazy horse he'd like as not break him all up.

"There's one thing a driver must have, and that's a cool head. He must not be all down when he doesn't win, or way up when he does, but just take it as it comes and go it. I've seen men on the track with money up on their horses who were as worked up about it as an old lady that had got to have her tooth pulled out. That won't do. I don't take any stock in cordials to give a man the necessary courage. A good night's sleep is the best thing that any man can take before a race. Of course we bet on the races. That's what we are interested in; it's part of our business. I don't think horsemen gamble much outside. They put in their money on a horse just as a man buys a barrel of flour and expects to get more than he gave for it. The public think there's a good deal more crooked work than there really is. I don't know a driver, and I've slept with most of 'em, who would pull his employer's horse to win money himself. It wouldn't pay. Driving is a profession now, and a man who has paid $5,000 or $10,000 for a piece of property hunts till he finds a good man to take care of it, and then pays him handsomely. Most owners have all the money they want and are anxious only that their horses win.—*Springfield (Mass.) Republican.*

Some Mitigating Circumstances.

"See here, Sloshinger, I want to talk to you a moment," said an Austin philanthropist, "don't you know you are not doing your duty by your children in not sending them to school. That's not the way a fond father should treat his children."

"Well, now, I don't know about that," replied Sloshinger. "I don't believe you fully realize what you are talking about. Now I have a brother whose oldest son was sent up for two years for horse stealing, and the Judge, in sentencing him, said that his ignorance and lack of early education were strong mitigating circumstances in his case; and instead of making the sentence ten years, which he would have done had the boy ever received any education, he would make it only two. Now, do you suppose I am going to rob my boys of those mitigating circumstances that have already been such a bonanza in the family? No, sir; before I do that, I hope my right arm will cling to the roof of my mouth."—*Texas Siftings.*

—A negro named Carter was dancing for the amusement of a street crowd in an Ohio town. Something was said that displeased him, and he fired his revolver at the crowd. The ball struck a man in the breast, glanced and struck an iron pump-handle, and was split, and each of the pieces wounded another man.—*Cleveland Leader.*